

Masthead Logo

**The Palimpsest**

Volume 53 | Number 8

Article 7

8-1-1972

# Champions of Champions

Herbert V. Hake

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/palimpsest>

Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

## Recommended Citation

Hake, Herbert V. "Champions of Champions." *The Palimpsest* 53 (1972), 364-370.

Available at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/palimpsest/vol53/iss8/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the State Historical Society of Iowa at Iowa Research Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Palimpsest by an authorized administrator of Iowa Research Online. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).



## Champions of Champions

During the 60 years that the Cattle Congress has been in show business on its present grounds, there have been many Grand Champions among the dairy cattle, as well as among the draft animals in the Belgian Horse Show. A complete listing of them would be overpowering to the general reader. However, there are two Grand Champions who are in classes by themselves and are therefore deserving of special mention.

Rex Conn, Farm Editor of *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, is quoted in *The Draft Horse Journal* for August, 1964, as saying:

Altogether too rarely there has appeared in almost every breed of livestock a great sire whose inheritance has shaped the future of his breed. The inheritance of Anxiety 4th still is felt in the Hereford breed, and the blood of Earl Marshall still carries on among the Angus.

None of these prepotent sires of other breeds has cast a longer shadow than has Farceur, the great Belgian stallion of a half-century ago. His get dominated the American show ring for a decade and a half, and his blood flows in the veins of the vast majority of registered Belgians in this country today.

Farceur was foaled in 1910 on the farm of the Nerickx Brothers near Hal, Belgium. His sire was



Bayard de Ruyen, and his dam was a mare named Finette. In the summer of 1912, two Iowa horse breeders and importers were in Belgium selecting animals for shipment to the United States. William Crownover of Hudson and Grant Good of Ogden were friendly competitors in the show ring and in the horse trade, but they traveled separately. Both undoubtedly saw and had a chance to buy Farceur, but it was Crownover who recognized the potential of the colt and bought him. The valuable import reached this country on October 21, 1912.

Farceur began his undefeated show ring career in 1913 by winning Grand Championships at the Iowa State Fair and the International Livestock Exposition. He was Grand Champion every year thereafter—wherever he appeared—until 1916, when Crownover retired him from the show ring. With the stud at the peak of his reputation, William Crownover decided to disperse his Belgians and Percherons. The sale was held on October 16, 1917, at the fairgrounds in Cedar Falls. The Cedar Valley Fair was the outstanding show in Black Hawk County until it was eclipsed by the Dairy Cattle Congress. Following is the account of the sale as it appeared in *Breeder's Gazette*, the leading livestock periodical of the time:

Conditions could not have been more favorable to making a smashing event than those which preceded and ac-



accompanied the sale on October 16, 1917. The weather was perfect. The selling was done on the race course, in front of the grandstand. A spectacular opening was furnished when the much talked-of Farceur entered the ring, bedecked with the ribbons he had won in many a battle.

When bids were called for, men representing opposite sides in the bidding seemed determined to go the limit in trying to buy the stallion that is conceded to be the best type of the breed in America. The bidding did not cease until \$47,500 was reached. This was a figure that the most ardent Belgian enthusiast could not have hoped to see realized in the selling of Farceur.

The successful bidder was Grant Good of Ogden, Iowa, the same breeder who had seen Farceur when the stallion was still a colt in Belgium. Standing beside Grant Good on this eventful autumn afternoon in 1917 was his 14-year-old son, Lester, urging over and over again, "Buy him, Dad, buy him!" In recalling the great moment, many years later, Lester said to Maurice Telleen, "That was the price of a good quarter section of land in those days, and it took a lot of courage to make the investment, but I don't believe Dad ever regretted it."

The great roan stallion held court at Good's Oakdale Farm until his death on Christmas Eve, 1921, but this was by no means the end of the story.

Farceur never entered the show ring in Water-



loo, because the National Belgian Horse Show did not come into being until 1919, but in the five years immediately following his death, five sons and two daughters were named Grand Champions at the National Belgian Show. In 1925, his granddaughter was named Grand Champion Mare, and in 1926 a grandson carried on the tradition of National Champions bred from Champions. As time moved on, the grandsons and granddaughters gave way to future generations. The blood of Farceur has carried through the years.

The Crownover and Good families, so closely associated in the story of Farceur, were united in 1925 when Lester Good and Hazel Crownover were married. Their Oakdale Farm is proudly identified as "The Home of the Farceurs."

#### *Jane of Vernon*

Another member of royalty associated with the Dairy Cattle Congress is Jane of Vernon, "Queen Mother" of the Brown Swiss line. *The Brown Swiss Bulletin* for July, 1964, declared:

If one were to write the complete story of Jane of Vernon's influence on our great breed, it would take volumes. Time or space does not permit going into detail to describe the tremendous impact she has had on the breed through her two sons and six daughters, their sons and daughters, etc. She more than fulfills every definition and meaning for the words 'Brood Cow.'



Jane was born February 28, 1929, on the Orbec Sherry Farm near Viroqua in Vernon County, Wisconsin. She was sired by Janet's Boy of Elmhurst 9695, and her dam was Butternut Jane 12364. People began hearing about Jane of Vernon when Mr. Sherry, who was an active exhibitor in those days, brought her out as a two-year-old. Nationally prominent dairy cattle judges who saw Jane on the show circuit that year pronounced her to have the best udder that they had ever seen on a two-year-old of any breed.

The eyes of the entire dairy world were centered on Jane in 1932 when, as a four-year-old, she won the Grand Champion Award at the National Dairy Cattle Congress in Waterloo, Iowa, and completed a record of 23,569 pounds of milk and 1,075 pounds of butterfat. Jane's honors continued. She repeated as Grand Champion of the National Show in 1933, 1934 and 1936, and she made another record of over 1,000 pounds of butterfat as a ten-year-old.

Jane had one son and four daughters for Mr. Sherry. He showed Jane of Vernon 2nd to Grand Champion honors at the National Dairy Cattle Congress in 1938, and in 1939 he took the "Four Janes" to California for the National Dairy Show when it was held at Treasure Island. At this great event, the four full sisters won the three- and four-



year-old classes, the senior get of sire, the dairy herd, the best three females bred and owned by the exhibitor, and the produce of dam classes.

Jane of Vernon was purchased by Judd's Bridge Farm, New Milford, Connecticut, in 1936, where her influence continued. A son, Colonel Harry of J.B. 48672, and two daughters, Jane of Judd's Bridge 78476 and Jane's Chloe J.B. 109896, were born at this famous breeding establishment. The "Queen Mother" was laid to rest at Judd's Bridge Farm in May, 1945, at 17 years of age.

Four of Jane's daughters, Jane 2nd, Jane 3rd, Jane 4th and Jane 5th, passed most of their lives after the triumphs at Treasure Island at Lee's Hill Farm, New Vernon, New Jersey. Her son, Jane's Royal of Vernon, likewise lived at Lee's Hill, where most of his daughters were developed and whose list of 1,000 pound butterfat daughters has never been equaled.

Quoting the July, 1964, *Brown Swiss Bulletin* again:

The highest selling bull and female of all time, Welcome In Charmer (\$75,000) and Mabel's Tamarind Violet (\$12,000) were both sired by a Jane's Royal son, Royal's Tamarind of Lee's Hill.

Although only one of Jane's Royal daughters and only a few of Colonel Harry's daughters are still living (in 1964), Jane's influence continues through many combinations of her blood.



Thus, for more than four decades, Jane of Vernon has shaped the distinctive inheritance of her breed. The Brown Swiss, originating in the Alpine country of Europe, have been enriched by the life of a prairie Queen from Wisconsin.

HERBERT V. HAKE